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**CHAUCER**  
**THE BOOK OF THE TALES OF CAUNTERBURY**

**PROLOG**

(A 1-858)

**MIT VARIANTEN**

**ZUM GEBRAUCH BEI VORLESUNGEN**

**HERAUSGEGEBEN**

**VON**

**JULIUS ZUPITZA**

**ZWEITE UNVERÄNDERTE AUFLAGE**

---

**BERLIN**  
**WEIDMANNSCHE BUCHHANDLUNG**  
1896.

124 16.34  
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Pierce fund.

*E* = Ellesmere  
*H* = Hengwrt  
*M* = Harley 7334

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*C* = Corpus Christi Coll., Oxford  
*h*<sup>1</sup> = Harley 1758 (v. 1—36)  
*h*<sup>2</sup> = Harley 7333 (gelegentlich)  
*L* = Lansdowne  
*P* = Petworth  
*p* = Pariser (gelegentlich)  
*S* = Sloane (v. 757—858)  
*U* = University Library, Cambridge (v. 37—756)

Wenn die in den text aufgenommene lesart durch *EHM* oder *EM* oder *HM* bezeugt ist, sind etwaige varianten der übrigen hss. in der regel nicht angeführt. die schreibung folgt im ganzen *E*: jede abweichung von diesem wird angegeben und in einem solchen falle (abgesehen von dem gebrauche großer und kleiner buchstaben) auch die schreibung von *HM* berücksichtigt.

- W**han that Aprille with his shoures soote  
 The droghte of March hath perced to the roote  
 And bathed euery veyne in swich licour,  
 Of which vertu engendred is the flour;  
 5 Whan Zephirus eek with his swete breeth  
 Inspired hath in euery holt and heeth  
 The tendre croppes and the yonge sonne  
 Hath in the Ram his halfe cours yronne  
 And smale fowles maken melodye,  
 10 That slepen al the nyght with open ye  
 (So priketh hem nature in hir corages):  
 Than longen folk to goon on pilgrimages  
 (And palmers for to seken straunge strondes)  
 To ferne halwes kowthe in sondry londes,  
 15 And specially from euery shires ende  
 Of Engelond to Caunturbury they wende  
 The hooly blisful martir for to seke,  
 That hem hath holpen, whan þat they wer seeke.  
  
 20 **B**ifil, that, in that sesoun on a day  
 In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay  
 Redy to wenden on my pilgrymage  
 To Caunterbury with ful deuout corage,  
 At nyght was come in to that hostelrye  
 Wel nyne and twenty in a compaignye  
 25 Of sondry folk by aventure y-falle

---

1 Whanne that April *Tyrwhitt* || hise *E* 8 half *EH* 9 foweles  
*EH* 10 ye] yhe *M*, Iye *H*, eye *E* 12 Thanne *EHM* 13 Palmeres  
*EH*, 18 were *EM*, weere *H* 19 seson *E* 23 were *E*



In felawshipe, and pilgrims were they alle,  
 That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde.  
 The chambres and the stables weren wyde,  
 And wel we weren esed atte beste.  
 30 And, shortly, whan the sonne was to reste,  
 So hadde I spoken with hem everychon,  
 That I was of hir felawshipe anon,  
 And made forward erly for to ryse  
 To take our wey, ther as I yow deuyse.

35 **B**ut nathelees, whil I hauē tyme and space,  
 Er that I ferther in this tale pace,  
 Me thynketh it acordaunt to resoun  
 To telle yow al the condicioun  
 Of ech of hem, so as it semed me,  
 40 And whiche they wer and of what degree  
 And eek in what array that they wer inne;  
 And at a knyght than wol I first bigynne.

**A**knyght ther was and that a worthy man,  
 That fro the tyme, that he first bigan  
 45 To riden out, he loued chivalrie,  
 Trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisie.  
 Ful worthy was he in his lordes werre,  
 And therto hadde he riden (no man ferre)  
 As wel in cristendom as hethenesse  
 50 And euere honoured for his worthynesse.

At Alisaundre he was, whan it was wonne.  
 Ful ofte tyme he hadde the bord bigonne  
 Abouen alle naciouns in Pruce.  
 In Lettow hadde he reysed and in Ruce:  
 55 No cristen man so ofte of his degree.  
 In Gernade at the seege eek hadde he be

---

26 felaweshipe *H*, felaweship *E*, felaschipe *M* || pilgryms *M*,  
 pilgrimes *E*, pilgrymes *H* 32 felawschipe *M*, wie 26 *EH* 33 erly  
 to aryse *M* 34 oure *EHM* 40 were *E*, weere *H*, weren *M*  
 41 were *EM*, weere *H* || Inne *E* 49 as in Hethenesse *E* 53 naciouns  
*EH* 54 he *f*. *M* 56 eek *f*. *M*

- Of Algezir and riden in Belmarye.  
 At Lyeys was he and at Satalye,  
 Whan they wer wonne, and in the Grete See  
 60 Aȝ many a noble ariue hadde he be.  
 At mortal bataillēs hadde he been fiftene  
 And foughten for our feith at Tramysene  
 In lystes thries and ay slayn his foo.  
 This ilke worthy knyght had been also  
 65 Somtyme with the lord of Palatye  
 Agayn another hethen in Turkye,  
 And eueremoore he hadde a souereyn prys.  
 And, though þat he wer worthy, he was wys  
 And of his port as meeke, as is a mayde.  
 70 He neuere yet no vileynye ne sayde  
 In al his lyf vn to no maner wight.  
 He was a verray parfit gentil knyght.  
 But, for to tellen yow of his array,  
 His hors was good, but he ne was nat gay:  
 75 Of fustian he wered a gypoun  
 Al bismotered with his habergeoun;  
 For he was late ycome from his viage  
 And wente for to doon his pilgrymage.
- With hym ther was his sone, a yong squier,  
 80 A louyere and a lusty bacheler,  
 With lokkes crulle, as they wer leyd in presse.  
 Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse.  
 Of his stature he was of euen lengthe

---

57 Of] At *H* || Palmyrye *Ellis* (*A. Wright?*) 59 were *EM*,  
 weere *H* || grete *E* 60 ariue *M*, aryue *U*, Armee *E*, armee *H*,  
 arme(e) oder armeye *d. übr.* 62 oure *EHM* 64 hadde *EHM*  
 68 wer] were *EUP*, weere *H*, was *M u. d. übr.* 69 is *f. M*  
 70 He] Ne *H* || ne] he *H* 74 erstes was *ML*, weren *EP*, weryn *p*,  
 weere *H*, were *CU* || good *M*, goode *EH u. d. übr.* || ne *f. E*  
 57 Fustian *E* || gypon *E* 76 Alle *Tyrwhitt* || Was al? *ten Brink*,  
 habergeon *E*, haubergeon *H* 77 ycome *ECP*, comen *HM*, come  
*LUP* 79 Squier *E* 80 Bacheler *E* 81 were *EM*, weere *H* 82 he  
 was of age *HM gegen E u. d. übr.* || Age *E* 83 eueue *EHM*

- And wonderly delyuere and greet of strengthe.  
 85 And he had been somtyme in chyuachie  
 In Flaundres, in Artoys and Pycardie  
 And born hym weel, as of so litel space,  
 In hope to stonden in his lady grace.  
 Embrouded was he, as it were a meede  
 90 Al ful of fresshe floures whyte and reede.  
 Syngynge he was or floytynge al the day:  
 He was as fressh, as is the moneth of May.  
 Short was his gowne with sleues longe and wyde.  
 Wel koude he sitte on hors and faire ryde.  
 95 He koude songes make and wel endite,  
 Iuste and eek daunce and weel purtreye and write.  
 So hoot he louede, that by nyghtertale  
 He sleep namoore, than dooth a nyghtyngale.  
 Curteis he was, lowly and seruysable  
 100 And carf biforn his fader at the table.

- A yeman hadde he and seruantz namo  
 At that tyme, for hym liste ride soo,  
 And he was clad in cote and hood of grene:  
 A sheef of pecok arwes bright and kene  
 105 Vnder his belt he bar ful thriftily  
 (Wel koude he dresse his takel yemanly:  
 Hise arwes drouped noght with fetheres lowe),  
 And in his hand he baar a myghty bowe.  
 A not heed hadde he with a broun vsage.  
 110 Of woodecraft wel koude he al the vsage.  
 Vp on his arm he baar a gay bracer  
 And by his syde a swerd and a bokler  
 And on that oother syde a gay daggere  
 Harneised wel and sharp, as point of spere;

---

84 of greet *EHUp* gegen *Mu. d. übr.* 85 hadde *EHM* 86 and *EHC*, and in *Mu. d. übr.* 87 of] in *MH* gegen *E u. d. übr.* 92 is] in? *E* || Monthe *EH* 94 faire] wel cowde he *M* 95 wel vor songes *M*, vor make *H* 98 sleep *MC*, slepte (slepete *L*, slept *p*) *EH u. d. übr.* 99 lowly *EH* 101 Yeman *E* || he hadde *H* 110 wel vor al *HM* 112 bokeler *EHM* 114 as] at (*druckfehler* *p*) *M*

- 115 A Cristophre on his brest of siluer sheene.  
An horn he bar, the bawdryk was of grene.  
A forster was he, soothly, as I gesse.

- Ther was also a nonne, a prioresse,  
That of hir smylyng was ful symple and coy.
- 120 Hir gretteste ooth nas but 'by seinte Loy',  
And she was cleped madame Eglentyne.  
Ful weel she soong the seruice dyuyne,  
Entuned in hir nose ful seemely,  
And frenssh she spak ful faire and fetisly
- 125 After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe;  
For frenssh of Parys was to hire vnknowe.  
At mete wel ytaught was she with alle:  
She leet no morsel from hir lippes falle  
Ne wette hir fynGRES in hir sauce depe;
- 130 Wel koud she carie a morsel and wel kepe,  
That no drope ne fille vp on hir brest.  
In curteisie was set ful muche hir lest:  
Hire ouer lippe wyped she so clene,  
That in hir coppe was no ferthyng sene
- 135 Of grece, whan she dronken hadde hir draughte.  
Ful semely after hir mete she raughte,  
And, sikerly, she was of greet desport  
And ful plesaunt and amyable of port  
And peyned hire to countrefete cheere
- 140 Of court and been estatlich of manere  
And to ben holden digne of reuerence.  
But, for to speken of hir conscience,  
She was so charitable and so pitous,

---

115 Cristophre *E*, Cristofre *HM* 117 Forster *E* 118 Nonne  
*E* || PRIORESSE *E* 120 Hire *EM* || othe *Tyrwhitt* || nas *M*, was  
*EH* *u. d. übr.*, ne was *ten Brink* || seinte] seint *ECL*, Seint *H*,  
seynt *MU*, seynte *P* || Eloy *Urry* 123 semeely *E*, semely *H*, semyly *M*  
130 koude *EH*, cowde *M* 131 ne *f. HMP* || hire *EM* || brist *EH*  
132 ful m.] *f. muchel ELP*, ful meche *UC*, muchel *H*, al *M* || list  
*EH* 134 was *M*, ther was *EH* *u. d. übr.* 140 Court *E* || been *H*,  
ben *M*, to been *E* *u. d. übr.* 142 hire *EM*

- She wolde wepe, if that she sawe a mous  
 145 Kaught in a trappe, if it wer deed or bledde.  
 Of smale houndes had she, þat she fedde  
 With rosted flessch or milk and wastel breed;  
 But soore weep she, if oon of hem wer deed,  
 Or if men smoot it with a yerde smerte,  
 150 And al was conscience and tendre herte.  
 Ful semyly hir wimpul pynched was;  
 Hir nose tretys; hir eyen greye, as glas;  
 Hir mouth ful smal and ther to softe and reed.  
 But, sikerly, she hadde a fair forheed:  
 155 It was almoost a spanne brood, I trowe;  
 For, hardily, she was nat vndergrowe.  
 Ful fetys was hir cloke, as I was war.  
 Of smal coral aboute hir arm she bar  
 A peire of bedes gauded al with grene,  
 160 And ther on heng a brooche of gold ful sheene,  
 On which ther was first write a crowned A  
 And after: '*Amor vincit omnia*'.  
 Another nonne with hir hadde she,  
 That was hir chapeleyne, and preestes thre.
- 165 A Monk ther was a fair for the maistrie,  
 A An outridere, that louede venerie,  
 A manly man, to been an abbot able.  
 Ful many a deyntee hors had he in stable,

---

144 sawe *HM*, saugh *E* || Mous *E* 145 were *EM*, weere *H*  
 146 hadde *EHM* 147 or] and *M* || Milk *E* 148 wepped *L*, wepte  
*EHM u. d. übr.* || oon] any *E* || were *EM*, weere *H* 151 i-pynched *M*  
 152 Hire *EM* || tretys *E*, tretis *U*, trettez *H*, streight *M*, was streight  
*d. übr.* 158 hire *EM* || Arm *E* 160 brooch *EH*, broch *M* 161 ther *f.*  
*HM* || i-writen *M* 162 after that *M* 163 Nonne *E* || with—she] and  
 eek a preest par de *ten Brink* || hire *EHM* || she certeyn *Bradshaw*  
 164 And eke a prest that was here chappelleyne *Bradshaw* || That  
 was] And eke *Furnivall* || That] Than *Hertsberg* || hire *EHM* || Cha-  
 peleyne *E*, chastelleyn *Morris und Selby*, chamberleyne *Morris*,  
 sekesteyn *Furnivall* || and pr. th.] a preest thes thre *Hertsberg*,  
 with hire had she *ten Brink*, a preest parde (*oder* was he) *Furnivall*  
 165 Monk *E* 167 Abbot *E* 168 hadde *EHM*

- And, whan he rood, men myghte his brydel heere  
 170 Gynghen in a whistlynge wynd as cleere  
 And eek as loude, as dooth þe chapel belle,  
 Ther as this lord was kepere of the celle.  
 The reule of seint Maure or of seint Beneit,  
 By cause that it was old and som del streit —  
 175 This ilke monk leet olde thynges pace  
 And heeld after the newe world the space.  
 He yaf nat of that text a pulled hen,  
 That seith, that hunters been nat hooly men,  
 Ne that a monk, whan he is cloysterlees,  
 180 Is likned til a fissh, þat is waterlees,  
 This is to seyn, a monk out of his cloystre.  
 But thilke text heeld he nat worth an oystre,  
 And I seyde, his opinioun was good.  
 What sholde he studie and make hym seluen wood  
 185 Vpon a book in cloystre alwey to poure  
 Or swynken with his handes and laboure,  
 As Austyn bit? how shal the world be serued?  
 Lat Austyn haue his swynk to him reserued.  
 Therefore he was a prikasour aright;  
 190 Grehounds he hadde as swift, as fowl in flight:  
 Of prikyng and of huntyng for the hare  
 Was al his lust, for no cost wolde he spare.  
 I seigh his sleues purfild at the hond  
 With grys and that the fyneste of a lond,  
 195 And for to festne his hood vnder his chyn  
 He hadde of gold ywroght a curious pyn:  
 A loue knott in the gretter ende was.

---

170 as] als *EU*, al so *L*, so *M* 171 Chapel *E* 172 this] the  
*M* || is *H* || Celle *E* 175 Monk *E* || o. th.] forby hem *M*, it forby  
 him *ten Brink u. Ellis* 178 beth *E* || nat] none *H*, noon *M* 179  
 Monk *E* || cloysterles *M*, recchelees *EH*, recheles *CLP*, rekeles *U*,  
 reghelles? *Tyrwhitt*, recetlees *ten Brink* 180 til] to *MU* || þat is] al  
*ten Brink mit h<sup>3</sup> gegen a. übr.* 181 Monk *E* || Cloystre *E*  
 182 Oystre *E* 183 seyde *EH*, seide *M* || opinion *EH* 185 Cloystre *E*  
 188 heue *H* || his owene swynk *E* 190 Grehoundes *EH*, Greyhoundes  
*M* || fowel *EHM* 193 ypurfild *E* 196 wroght *H* || a *M*, a ful  
*EH u. d. übr.* 197 knotte *EHM* || ende ther was *EHM u. d. übr.*

His heed was balled and shoon, as any glas,  
 And eek his face, as he had been enoynt.  
 200 He was a lord ful fat and in good poynt;  
 Hise eyen stepe and rollynge in his heed,  
 That stemed, as a forneys of a leed;  
 His bootes souple, his hors in greet estaat:  
 Now certainly, he was a fair prelaat.  
 205 He was nat pale, as a forpynd goost:  
 A fat swan loued he best of any roost.  
 His palfrey was as broun, as is a berye.

A frere ther was a wantown and a merye,  
 A lymytour, a ful solempne man.  
 210 In alle the ordres foure is noon, þat kan  
 So muche of daliaunce and fair langage.  
 He hadde ymaad ful many a mariage  
 Of yonge wommen at his owne cost.  
 Vn to his ordre he was a noble post.  
 215 Ful wel biloued and famulier was he  
 With frankeleyns ouer al in his contree  
 And eek with worthy wommen of the toun;  
 For he had power of confessioun,  
 As seyde hym self, moore, than a curat;  
 220 For of his ordre he was licentiat.  
 Ful sweetly herde he confessioun,  
 And plesaunt was his absolucioun:  
 He was an esy man to yeue penaunce,  
 Ther as he wiste to haue a good pitaunce;  
 225 For vnto a poure ordre for to yiue  
 Is signe, þat a man is wel yshryue;  
 For, if he yaf, he dorste make avaunt,  
 He wiste, that a man was repentaunt;

---

198 and *M*, þat *EC*, that *H u. d. übr.* 199 he] it *E* || hadde  
*EHM* 205 as is a *H* 207 is a] any *H*, eny *M* 208 Frere  
*E* || wantowne *EH* 211 muchel *E* 212 i-made *M*, maad *E*, maked  
*H*, ma(a)d(e) *d. übr.* || ful *f. M* || many a fair *m. M* 213 owene *EH*  
 215 Ful] And *E* 217 eek *f. E* 218 hadde *EHM* 219 Curat *E*  
 221 swetely *EH*

- For many a man so hard is of his herte,  
 230 He may nat wepe, al thogh hym soore smerte:  
 Therfore in stede of wepyng and preyerer  
 Men moot yeue siluer to the poure freres.  
 His typet was ay farsed ful of knyues  
 And pynnes for to yeuen faire wyues,  
 235 And, certainly, he hadde a murye note:  
 Wel koude he synge and pleyen on a rote;  
 Of yeddyngs he baar outrely the pris.  
 His nekke whit was, as the flour delys,  
 Ther to he strong was, as a champion.  
 240 He knew the tauernes wel in euery toun  
 And euerich hostiler and tappestere  
 Bet, than a lazar or a beggestere;  
 For vn to swich a worthy man, as he,  
 Acorded nat, as by his facultee,  
 245 To haue with sike lazars aqueyntaunce:  
 It is nat honeste, it may not auance  
 For to deelen with no swich poraille,  
 But al with riche and sellers of vitaille,  
 And ouer al, ther as profit sholde arise,  
 250 Curteis he was and lowly of seruyse:  
 Ther nas no man nowher so vertuous.  
 He was the beste beggere in his hous;  
 For, thogh a wydwe hadde noght a sho,  
 So plesaunt was his '*In principio*',  
 255 Yet wolde he haue a ferthyng, er he wente:  
 His purchas was wel bettre, than his rente.

---

229 harde *E* 230 al thogh] thogh [at *H*, though *MU* || hym] he *H*  
 232 moote *EH*, mooten *M* 234 faire] yonge *E* 235 certain *M* 237 yed-  
 dynges *EHM* 239 Champion *E* 240 Tauernes *E* || wel vor the *M* ||  
 euery] al the *E* 241 Host. *E* || and] or gay *M*, or a *L* || Tapp. *E* 242 Better  
*Tyrwhitt u. ten Brink mit L* || bakystere *U*, beggere *MCP Tyrwhitt*  
*u. ten Brink*, Begger *L* 245 han *ten Brink* || Aq. *E* 247 As for  
*Tyrwhitt* || no *f. MCLP* 248 selleres *E*, sellerys *H* 249 as] eny  
*M, f. U* 250 lowly *EH*, lowe *M* 251 was *HMU* 252 in] in al  
*M*, of *H* || nach diesem vers And yaf a certeyn ferme for the graunt  
 Noon of his bretheren cam ther in his haunt *H* 253 noght a] but  
 oo *M* || sho] so (*d. i. sol* = sou) *Hertzberg* 256 wel *f. M*.



- And rage he koude, as it wer right a whelp.  
 In loue days ther koude he muchel help;  
 For there he was nat lyk a cloysterer  
 260 With a thredbare cope, as a poure scoler,  
 But he was lyk a maister or a pope:  
 Of double worstedē was his semycope,  
 That rounded, as a belle, out of the presse.  
 Somwhat he lipped for his wantownesse  
 265 To make his englissh sweete vp on his tonge,  
 And in his harpyng, whan he hadde songe,  
 Hise eyen twynkled in his heed aryght,  
 As doon the sterres in the frosty nyght.  
 This worthy lymytour was cleped Huberd.
- 270 A marchant was ther with a forked berd  
 A In mottelee, and hye on horse he sat  
 Vp on his heed a flaundryssh beuer hat,  
 His bootes clasped faire and fetisly.  
 His resouns he spak ful solempnely  
 275 Sownynge alway thencrees of his wynnynge.  
 He wolde, the see wer kept for any thing  
 Bitwixe Middelburgh and Orewelle.  
 Wel koude he in eschaunge sheeldes selle.  
 This worthy man ful wel his wit bisette,  
 280 Ther wiste no wight, þat he was in dette:  
 So estatly was he of his gouernaunce  
 With his bargayns and with his cheuyssaunce.  
 For sothe, he was a worthy man with alle,  
 But, sooth to seyn, I noot, how men hym calle.

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257 as it w. r.] right as it were *CLP*, and pleye as *M*, as it hadde ben *Tyrwhitt* || were *E*, weere *H* 258 dayes *EHM* || ther *f. H* 259 was he *M* || Cloyster *EH* 260 With thr. *Tyrwhitt* || as is a *EHU* 263 That] And *H* || rounded] *r.* was *M*, rounde *L*, round was *Tyrwhitt* || the *f. M* 264 his *f. M* 266 whan *Lp?*, whan þat *EHM u. d. übr.* 269 called *M* 270 March. *E* 271 Motlee *EH*, motteleye *M* || and *f. M* 272 Fl. *E* || Beuere *EH* 274 Hise *EH* || reasons *EHM* || spak he *Ellis* 275 Swownynge *M*, Schewyng *CLP* 276 were *EM*, weere *H* 280 wight] man *MU* 281 his *f. M* 282 bargaynes *EH* 284 how] what *M*

285 A clerk ther was of Oxenford also,  
 That vn to logyk hadde longe ygo.  
 As leene was his hors, as is a rake,  
 And he nas nat right fat, I vndertake,  
 But looked holwe and ther to sobrely.  
 290 Ful thredbare was his ouerest courtepy;  
 For he had geten hym yet no benefice  
 Ne was so worldly for to haue office;  
 For hym was leuere haue at his beddes heed  
 Twenty bookes clad in blak or reed  
 295 Of Aristotle and his philosophie,  
 Than robes riche or fithele or gay sautrie.  
 But, al be that he was a philosophre,  
 Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre;  
 But al, þat he myght of his freendes hente,  
 300 On bookes and on lernynge he it spente;  
 And bisily gan for the soules preye  
 Of hem, þat yaf hym, wher with to scoleye.  
 Of studie took he moost cure and moost heede.  
 Noght o word spak he moore, than was neede,  
 305 And that was seyde in forme and reuerence  
 And short and quyk and ful of hy sentence.  
 Sownynge in moral vertu was his speche,  
 And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche.

A sergeant of the lawe war and wys,  
 310 That often hadde been at the parvys,  
 Ther was also ful riche of excellence.  
 Discreet he was and of greet reuerence:

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285 Clerk *E* 287 As] And *E*, Al so *M* 288 was *HMLP*  
 290 ouereste *EH* 291 hadde *EH*, hadde nought *M* || no] a *M* 292 so  
 w.] not worthy *M* || for *f*. *MLP* || an of. *M* 294 A twenty *Tyrwhitt*,  
 Tw. good *p* || clothed *M*, iclad *U* || or] and *MCL* 295 of his *M* || Phil.  
*E* 296 gay *f*. *M* 297 But although he were *M* || Phil. *E* 299 myghte  
*EH* || of] gete and *M* || hente] sende *M* 300 2. on] his *EM* || spende  
*M* 302 yave *ten Brink* 303 2. moost *f*. *M* 305 Al that he spak  
 it was of heye prudence *M* || seyde] spoke *H* 306 hy] gret *M*  
 307 vertu] manere *M* 309 Sergeant *E* || the *f*. *HM* || Lawe *E*  
 310 Parvys *E*

- He semed swich, his wordes weren so wise.  
 Iustice he was ful often in assise  
 315 By patente and by pleyn commissioun.  
 For his science and for his heigh renoun  
 Of fees and robes hadde he many oon.  
 So greet a purchasour was nowher noon:  
 Al was fee symple to hym in effect;  
 320 His purchasyng myghte nat been infect.  
 Nowher so bisy a man, as he, ther nas,  
 And yet he semed bisier, than he was.  
 In termes hadde he caas and doomes alle,  
 That from the tyme of kyng William wer falle.  
 325 Ther to he koude endite and make a thyng,  
 Ther koude no wight pynche at his writyng,  
 And euery statut koude he pleyn by rote.  
 He rood but hoomly in a medlee cote  
 Girt with a ceint of silk with barres smale:  
 330 Of his array tell I no lenger tale.

- A frankleyn was in his compaignye.  
 Whit was his berd, as is the dayesye,  
 Of his complexioun he was sangwyn.  
 Wel loued he by the morwe a sop in wyn.  
 335 To lyuen in delit was euere his wone;  
 For he was Epicurus owne sone,  
 That heeld opinioun, that pleyn delit  
 Was verrayly felicittee parfit.  
 An housholdere and that a greet was he:  
 340 Seint Iulian he was in his contree.  
 His breed, his ale was always after oon;

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313 hise *EH* 314 Ass. *E* 318 was thernowher *M* 320 infect] to him  
 suspecte *M*, in suspect *Tyrwhitt*, suspecte *Morris* 323 he *f. M* 324  
 the *f. H* || of] that *M* || william *E, f. M* || were *EM*, weere *H* || yfalle *E*  
 326 wight] man *MU* || pynchen *EH* 328 medled *M* 330 telle *EHM*  
 331 Fr. *E* || ther was *M* 332 berd] heed *E* || is *f. M* || the] a *E*  
 334 by] in *M* || in] of *M* 335 euere] al *M* 336 Epicurius *M*, Epiournes *P*,  
 Opiournes *CL* || owene *EH* 338 verrailly *M*, verray *EH*, verrey *CLP*,  
 very *U*, his verray *p* 340 was he *E* 341 Ale *E* || alwey *MLU*

- A better envyned man was neuere noon;  
 With oute bake mete was neuere his hous  
 Of fissh and flessch, and that so plenteuous,  
 345 It snewed in his hous of mete and drynke,  
 Of alle deynteys, that men koude thynke.  
 After the sondry sesouns of the yeer  
 So chaunged he his mete and his soper.  
 Ful many a fat partrich had he in muwe  
 350 And many a breeme and many a luce in stuwe.  
 Wo was his cook, but if his sauce were  
 Poynaunt and sharp and redy al his geere.  
 His table dormant in his halle alway  
 Stood redy couered al the longe day.  
 355 At sessiouns ther was he lord and sire,  
 Ful ofte tyme he was knyght of the shire.  
 An anlaas and a gipsere al of silk  
 Heeng at his girdel whit, as morne milk.  
 A shirreue hadde he been and a countour.  
 360 Was nowher such a worthy vauasour.

- A N haberdasshere and a carpenter,  
 A webbe, a dyere and a tapycer  
 Wer with us eek clothed in o lyuree  
 Of a solempne and greet fraternitee.  
 365 Ful fressh and newe hir geere apiked was.  
 Hir knyues were ychaped, noght with bras,  
 But al with siluer, wroght ful clene and weel  
 Hir girdles and hir pouches euerydeel.  
 Wel semed ech of hem a fair burgeys

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342 neuere] nowher *MPU* 344 fleissch and fisch *M* || fressh  
 fissh *H* 346 bithynke *H* 347 sesons *EH* 348 He ch. him his *ten*  
*Brink* || So] He *M* || he] hem *M* || his] at *beidemal* *M* 349 hadde *EH*  
 || Muwe *E* 350 Breem *E*, breem *H*, breem *M* || Stuwe *E* 351 Cook *E*  
 357 Anlaas *E* || gipser *EHM* 358 Milk *E* 359 2. a.f. *EHU* || Countour  
*E* 360 Vauasour *E* 361 Carp. *E* 362 We. *E* || Dy. *E* || Tap. *E*  
 363 Weren w. us eek *M*, And they were *EH u. d. übr.*, Were alle  
*Tyrwhitt* || yclothed *Tyrwhitt* || in *M*, alle in *EH u. d. übr.* || lyueres *EH*,  
 lyvere *M* 364 and *M*, and a *EH u. d. übr.* 365 hir f. *M* || piked *M*  
 366 i-chapud *M*, chap *P*, chaped *EH u. d. übr.* 368 Hire *E*, Here *M*

370 To sitten in a yeldhalle on a deys:  
 Euerich for the wisdom, þat he kan,  
 Was shaply for to been an alderman;  
 For catel hadde they ynogh and rente,  
 And eek hir wyues wolde it wel assente,  
 375 And elles, certeyn, were they to blame:  
 It is ful fair to been ycleped 'ma dame'  
 And goon to vigilies al bifore  
 And haue a mantel roialliche ybore.

380 **A** cook they hadde with hem for the nones  
 To boille the chiknes with the marybones  
 And poudre marchant tart and galyngale.  
 Wel koude he knowe a draughte of Londoun ale.  
 He koude rooste and sethe and broille and frye,  
 Maken mortreux and wel bake a pye.  
 385 But greet harm was it, as it thoughte me,  
 That on his shyne a mormal hadde he;  
 For blankmanger, that made he with the beste.

**A** shipman was ther wonynge fer by weste:  
 For aught, I woot, he was of Dertemouthe.  
 390 He rood vp on a rouncy, as he kouthe,  
 In a gowne of faldyng to the knee.  
 A dagger hangynge on a laas had he  
 Aboute his nekke vnder his arm adoun.  
 The hoote somer had maad his hewe al broun,  
 395 And, certainly, he was a good felawe.  
 Ful many a draughte of wyn had he ydrawe

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370 yeldehalle *EHM* || 2. a] the *ML* 371 Euery man *M* 372 Ald.  
*E* 375 they were *HCLP*, hadde thei ben *M* 376 ful] right *M* || for  
 to *M* || ycleped *EH*, cleped *CLPU*, clept *M* || Dame *E* 377 And for  
 to go *M* || vigils *ten Brink* 378 Mantel *E* 379 Cook *E* 380 1. the *f*.  
*M* || with] and *MU* || Ma. *E* 381 Mar. *E* 383 1. u. 2. and *f*. *M* || boille  
*E*, boyle *U* 384 Mortreux *E*, mortrewes *Tyrwhitt* || and eek wel  
*ten Brink* 385 semede *MU* 387 that *f*. u. he vor m. *M* 388 Ship. *E*  
 390 Rouncy *E* 391 All in *Tyrwhitt* || unto *einige hss. nach Tyr-*  
*whitt* 392 daggere *EH* || hadde *EHM* 393 Arm *E* 394 hadde  
*EH* 396 he hadde *C* || i-drawe *U*, drawe *EHM* u. d. *übr.*

- Fro Burdeuxward, whil that the chapman sleep.  
 Of nyce conscience took he no keep.  
 If þat he faught and hadde the hyer hond,  
 400 By water he sente hem hoom to euery lond.  
 But of his craft to rekene wel his tydes,  
 His stremes and his daungers hym bisides,  
 His herberwe and his moone, his lodmenage  
 Ther nas noon swich from Hulle to Cartage.  
 405 Hardy he was and wys to vndertake.  
 With many a tempeste hadde his berd been shake.  
 He knew wel alle the hauenes, as they were,  
 Fro Gootlond to the Cape of Fynystere  
 And euery cryke in Britaigne and in Spayne.  
 410 His barge ycleped was the Maudelayne.

- With vs ther was a doctour of phisik.  
 In al this world ne was ther noon hym lik  
 To speke of phisik and of surgerie;  
 For he was grounded in astronomye.  
 415 He kepte his pacient a ful greet deel  
 In houres by his magyk natureel.  
 Wel koude he fortunen the ascendent  
 Of hise ymages for his pacient.  
 He knew the cause of euerich maladye,  
 420 Were it of hoot or cold, or moyste or drye,  
 And wher they engendred and of what humour.  
 He was a verray parfit praktisour:  
 The cause yknowe and of his harm the roote  
 Anon he yaf the sike man his boote.  
 425 Ful redy hadde he hise apothecaries  
 To sende him drogges and his letuaries;

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397 Chap. *E* 401 2. his] the *M* 403 lodmenage *EM* 404 was  
*HMCL* 406 tempest *EHM* || hath *M* 407 wel *f. EHu.d.übr. ausser M*  
 408 Fron *E*, From *M*, Fro *Hu.d.übr.* || Scotlond *M* 410 Barge *E*  
 411 Ther was also a *M* || D. of Ph. *E* 413 Surg. *E* 414 Astr. *E*  
 415 a f. g. deel] wondrously wel *M* 417 Asc. *E* 420 of cold or  
 hete *M*, of hoot of cold *C*, of colde of hote *L* 421 where *EHM* ||  
 they] it *HL*, *f. CP* 425 Apoc. *E* 426 dragges *M*, his drogges *H*

- For ech of hem mad oother for to wynne:  
 Hir frendship nas nat newe to bigynne.  
 Wel knew he the olde Esculapius  
 430 And Deyscorides and eek Rufus,  
 Olde Ypocras, Haly and Galyen,  
 Serapion, Razis und Auycen,  
 Auerrois, Damascien and Constantyn,  
 Bernard and Gatesden and Gilbertyn.  
 435 Of his diete mesurable was he;  
 For it was of no superfluitee,  
 But of greet norissyng and digestible.  
 His studie was but litel on the Bible.  
 In sangwyn and in pers he clad was al  
 440 Lyned with taffata and with sendal,  
 And yet he was but esy of dispenche:  
 He kepte, that he wan in pestilence.  
 For gold in phisik is a cordial,  
 Therefore he louede gold in special.
- 445 **A** good wif was ther of biside Bathe,  
 But she was som del deef, and þat was scathe.  
 Of clooth makynge she hadde swich an haunt,  
 She passed hem of Ypres and of Gaunt.  
 In al the parisshe wif ne was ther noon,  
 450 That to the offryng bifore hir sholde goon;  
 And, if ther dide, certeyn, so wrooth was she,  
 That she was thanne out of al charitee.  
 Hir couerchiefs ful fyne were of ground:  
 I dorste swere, they weyeden ten pound,  
 455 That on a sonday were vpon hir heed.  
 Hir hosen weren of fyn scarlet reed  
 Ful streite yteyd and shoos ful moyste and newe.

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427 made *EM*, maade *H* || 2. for *f. M* 428 frendshipe *EH*, frend-  
 schipe *M* || was *HMU* 430 Rufus *MP*, Rufijs *U*, Rusus *HCL*,  
 Risus *E* 431 Old *MP* || ypocras *E* 437 norissyng *E*, norisching *M*  
 440 Taff. *E* || Sendal *E* 441 of] in *M* 443 Phisik *E* 448 ypres *E*  
 450 offrynge *EH* || hire *EHM* 452 thanne *nur in M* || alle *EHM*  
 453 weren ful fyne *M* || weere *H*, weren *E* 455 were *M*, weren *E*,  
 weeren *H* 457 schoos *M*, shoes *EH*

- Boold was hir face and fair and reed of hewe.  
 She was a worthy womman al hir lyue.  
 460 Housbondes at chirche dore she hadde fyue  
 Withouten oother compaignye in youthe,  
 But ther of nedeth nat to speke, as nowthe.  
 And thries had she been at Ierusalem.  
 She hadde passed many a straunge strem.  
 465 At Rome she hadde been and at Boloigne,  
 In Galice at seint Iame and at Coloigne.  
 She koude muche of wandryng by the weye.  
 Gat-tothed was she, soothly for to seye.  
 Vp on an amblere esily she sat  
 470 Wymples wel and on hir heed an hat  
 As brood, as is a bokeler or a targe,  
 A foot mantel aboute hir hipes large  
 And on hir feet a paire of spores sharpe.  
 In felawshipe wel koud she laughe and carpe.  
 475 Of remedies of loue she knew per chaunce,  
 For she koud of that art the olde daunce.

- A good man was ther of religioun  
 And was a poure persoun of a toun,  
 But riche he was of hooly thought and werk;  
 480 He was also a lerned man, a clerk,  
 That Cristes gospel trewly wolde preche:  
 His parisschens deuoutly wolde he teche.  
 Benygne he was and wonder diligent  
 And in aduersitee ful pacient,  
 485 And swich he was ypreued ofte sithes.  
 Ful looth wer hym to cursen for his tithes,  
 But rather wolde he yeuen, out of doute,

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460 at *EHU*, atte *MCP*, att þe *L* || hadde she *M*, had she had  
*Tyrwhitt* 463 hadde *EHM* 466 Seint *E* 467 muchel *EH* || wan-  
 drynge *EH* 469 Ambl. *E* 470 Wymples ful wel *M* 473 hire *EM*  
 474 felawschipe *M*, felaweshipe *H*, felaweship *E* || koude *EH*, cowde  
*M* || she *f.* *M* 476 For of that art sche knew *M* || koude *EH* || Art *E*  
 477 Rel. *E* 478 Pers. *E* 481 cristes *E* || trewely *EH*, gladly *M*  
 482 Hise *E* 484 Ad. *E* 485 i-proved *M*, preued *ECP*, proeued *H*,  
 preuyd *U*, preuede *L* 486 were *EM*, weere *H* || hise *E*



Vn to his poure parissshens aboute  
 Of his offryng and eek of his substaunce:  
 490 He koude in litel thyng hauē suffisaunce.  
 Wyd was his parisshe and houses fer a sonder,  
 But he ne lafte nat for reyn ne thonder  
 In sikness nor in meschief to visite  
 The ferreste in his parisshe muche and lite  
 495 Vp on his feet and in his hand a staf.  
 This noble ensample to his sheep he yaf,  
 That first he wroghte and afterward he taughte.  
 Out of the gospel he tho wordes caughte,  
 And this figure he added eek ther to,  
 500 That, if gold ruste, what shal iren doo?  
 For, if a preest be foul, on whom we truste,  
 No wonder is a lewed man to ruste,  
 And shame it is, if a prest take keep,  
 A shiten shepherde and a clene sheep.  
 505 Wel oghte a preest ensample for to yiue  
 By his clenness, how his sheep shold lyue.  
 He sette nat his beneficē to hyre  
 And leet his sheep encombred in the myre  
 And ran to Londoun vn to seinte Poules  
 510 To seken hym a chauntrie for soules  
 Or with a bretherhed to been withholde,  
 But dwelte at hoom and kepte wel his folde,  
 So that the wolf ne made it nat myscarie:  
 He was a shepherde and no mercenarie.  
 515 And, though he hooly were and vertuous,  
 He was to synful men nat despitous  
 Ne of his speche daungerous ne digne,  
 But in his techyng discreet and benygne:

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489 offryng *E* 493 siknesse *EHM* || nor] ne *M* 496 unto *M*  
 497 firste *E* || afterward that *EP*, after that *M* 499 eek] yit *M*, *f. U*  
 500 sholde *HMP* || Iren *E* 501 on] in *H* 503 if that a *M* 505 yeue  
*E* 506 how *LU*, how þat *EHM u. d. übr.* || sholde *EHM* 508 lefte  
*M* || Myre *E* 509 1. to] unto *Tyrwhitt* || seynte *M*, Seinte *C*, seint *EH*  
*LPU* 511 to *f. M* 512 dwelleth *E* || kepeth *E* 514 no *M*, noght  
 a *EH u. d. übr.* || Merc. *E* 516 man *EM* || nat *vor* to *EH u. d. übr.*  
*ausser M*

To drawen folk to heuene by fairnesse,  
 520 By good ensample, was his bisynesse,  
 But it wer any persone obstinat:  
 What so he were, of heigh or lough estat,  
 Hym wolde he snybben sharply for the nonys.  
 A bettre preest, I trow, þat nowher noon ys.  
 525 He waited after no pompe and reuerence  
 Ne maked him a spiced conscience,  
 But Cristes loore and hise apostles twelue  
 He taughte, and first he folwed it hym selue.

With hym ther was a plowman, was his brother,  
 530 That hadde ylad of dong ful many a fother.  
 A trewe swynkere and a good was he  
 Lyuyng in pees and parfit charitee.  
 God loued he best with al his hoole herte  
 At alle tymes, thogh hym gamed or smerte,  
 535 And thanne his neighebour, right as hym selue.  
 He wolde thresshe and ther to dyke and delue  
 For Cristes sake for euery poure wight  
 Withouten hire, if it lay in his myght.  
 His tithes payde he ful faire and wel  
 540 Bothe of his propre swynk and his catel.  
 In a tabard he rood vpon a mere.

Ther was also a reue and a millere,  
 A somnour and a pardoner also,  
 A maunciple and my self: ther nere namo.  
 545 The miller was a stout carl for the nones:

519 by] with *H* || clennesses *MU* 520 this was *EH u. d. übr.*  
*ausser M* 521 were *EM*, weere *H* 524 trowe *EHM* || þat] ther *HM*,  
*f. U* 525 waiteth *E*, ne waited *ten Brink* || no *getilgt von ten*  
*Brink* || and] ne *MU* 527 cristes *E* || Ap. *E* 528 and *M*, but *EH*  
*u. d. übr.* 529 hym *f. M?* || Pl. *E* || 2. was *f. M*, that was *U*  
 533 hoole] trewe *M, f. CL* 534 hym] he *E* 535 neighebores *EH*  
 537 cristes *E* || 2. for] with *HM* 539 Hise *E* 540 pr.] owne *M*  
 541 Tab. *E* || he *f. M* || Mere *E* 542 Reue *E* || Mill. *E* 543 S.  
*E* || P. *E* 544 Mau. *E* || nare *CL*, nar *P*, were *EHU*, was *M*  
 545 Millere *EH*, mellere *M*

- Ful byg he was of brawn and eek of bones.  
 That proued wel; for ouer al, ther he cam,  
 At wrastlyng he wold haue away the ram.  
 He was short-sholdred, brood, a thikke knarre.  
 550 Ther nas no dore, þat he nold heue of harre  
 Or breke it at a rennyng with his heed.  
 His berd, as any sowe or fox, was reed  
 And ther to brood, as though it were a spade.  
 Vp on the cop right of his nose he hade  
 555 A werte, and ther on stood a toft of herys  
 Reed, as the brustles of a sowes erys:  
 His nosethirles blake were and wyde.  
 A swerd and a bokler bar he by his syde.  
 His mouth as greet was, as a greet forneys:  
 560 He was a ianglere and a goliardeys,  
 And that was moost of synne and harlotries.  
 Wel koude he stelen corn and tollen thries,  
 And yet he hadde a thombe of gold, pardee.  
 A whit cote and a blew hood wered he.  
 565 A baggepipe koude he blowe and sowne,  
 And ther with al he broghte vs out of towne.

- A gentil maunciple was ther of a temple,  
 Of which achatours myghte take exemple  
 For to be wise in byynge of vitaille;  
 570 For, whether that he payde or took by taille,  
 Algate he wayted so in his achaat,  
 That he was ay biforn and in good staat.  
 Now is nat that of god a ful fair grace,  
 That swich a lewed mannes wit shal pace  
 575 The wisdom of an heep of lerned men?  
 Of maistres hadde he mo, than thries ten,

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548 wolde *EHM* || haue] bere *M* || away] alwey *EHU* || Ram *E*  
 550 was *H* || nolde *M*, noolde *H*, ne wolde *E* 551 at] with *ML*  
 557 Hise *EH* 558 2. a *streicht ten Brink mit C* || bocler *M*, bokeler  
*EH* 559 1. greet] wyde *M* 560 Ianglere *E* || and *f. H* 564 2. a  
*f. M* 565 wel koude *EH u. d. übr. ausser M* 567 Maunc. *E*  
 568 Achat. *E* 570 whethur *M*, wheither *EH* 571 Ach. *E* 573  
 fair] greet *H* 576 he *f. MC*

That were of lawe expert and curious,  
 Of which þer were a duszeyne in that hous  
 Worthy to been stywards of rente and lond  
 580 Of any lord, that is in Engelond,  
 • To make hym lyue by his propre good  
 In honour dettelees, but he wer wood,  
 Or lyue as scarsly, as hym list desire,  
 And able for to helpen al a shire  
 585 In any caas, þat myghte falle or happe;  
 And yet this manciple sette hir aller cappe.

The reue was a sclendre colerik man.  
 His berd was shaue, as ny as euer he kan.  
 His heer was by his erys rounde yshorn.  
 590 His top was dokked lyk a preest biforn.  
 Ful longe were his legges and ful lene  
 Ylyk a staf: ther was no calf ysene.  
 Wel koude he kepe a gerner and a bynne:  
 Ther was noon auditour, koud on him wyne.  
 595 Wel wiste he by the droghte and by the reyn  
 The yeldyng of his seed and of his greyn.  
 His lordes sheep, his neet, his dayerye,  
 His swyn, his hors, his stoor and his pultrye  
 Was hoolly in this reues gouernynge,  
 600 And by his couenant yaf the rekenynge,  
 Syn that his lord was twenty yeer of age.  
 Ther koude no man bryng hym in arrerage.  
 Ther nas baillif ne hierde ne oother hyne,  
 That he ne knew his sleighte and his couyne:  
 605 They were adrad of hym, as of the deeth.  
 His wonyng was ful faire vp on an heeth:

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577 weren *E*, weeren *H* 578 whiche *EH* || weren *E* || that] an  
*M* 579 stiwardz *M*, stywardes *EH* 581 maken *E* 582 but *U*,  
 but if *EHML*, but if that *CP* || were *EM*, weere *H* 583 hym list] he  
 can *M* 587 Reue *E* 589 rounde *L*, ful rounde *P*, ful roud *U*,  
 ful round *EH*, neighe *M* 590 dokked *E* 592 ylyk *E*, Al like *M*  
 594 Aud. *E* || koude *EHM* || of him *E* 599 Reues *E* || gouernynge *E*  
 600 rekenynge *E* 602 brynge *EH*, bringe *M* || Arr. *E* 603 i. ne  
 f. *HU* || 2. ne *MLU*, nor *EHCP* 604 he] they *M* || ne f. *EU*

- With grene trees yshadwed was his place,  
 He koude better, than his lord, purchace:  
 Ful riche he was astored pryuely.
- 610 His lord wel koude he plesen subtilly  
 To yeue and lene hym of his owne good  
 And haue a thank and yet a coote and hood.  
 In youthe he lerned hadde a good myster:  
 He was a wel good wrighte, a carpenter.
- 615 This reue sat vp on a ful good stot,  
 That was a pomely grey and highte Scot.  
 A long surcote of pers vp on he hade,  
 And by his syde he baar a rusty blade.  
 Of Northfolk was this reue, of which I telle,
- 620 Biside a toun, men clepen Baldeswelle.  
 Tukked he was, as is a frere, aboute,  
 And euer he rood the hyndreste of our route.

- A somonour was ther with vs in that place,  
 That hadde a fyr reed cherubynnes face
- 625 (For sawcefeem he was) with eyen narwe.  
 As hoot he was and lecherous, as a sparwe,  
 With scaled browes blake and piled berd.  
 Of his visage children were aferd.  
 Ther nas quyk siluer, lytarge ne brymstoon,
- 630 Boras, ceruce ne oille of tartre noon  
 Ne oynement, that wolde clense and byte,  
 That hym myght helpen of his whelkes white  
 Nor of the knobbes sittyng on his chekes.  
 Wel loued he garleek, oynouns and eek lekes
- 635 And for to drynken strong wyn reed, as blood:  
 Than wolde he speke and crie, as he wer wood.

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607 shadwed *EH u. d. übr. ausser MU* 609 i-stored *M*  
 611 owne *EH* 612 and yet] yet *E, f. M* || coote] gowne *E* || and  
 eek an hood *M* 613 hadde lerned *E* 614 Carp. *E* 615 Reue *E*  
 || ful] wel *HMP* 616 a] al *E* 617 pers] blew *M* 619 Reue *E*  
 620 callen *M* 622 oure *EH*, the *M* 623 Som. *E* 624 Cher. *E*  
 626 As] And *H* 629 ne] or *Ellis mit CLP* 630 Cer. *E* || Tartre *E*  
 632 might *M*, myghte *EH* || his] the *E* 633 Ne *MPU*, Nere *L*  
 634 oynouns *EH* 636 Thanne *EHM* || were *EHM*

- And, whan þat he wel dronken hadde the wyn,  
 Than wolde he speke no word, but latyn.  
 A fewe termes hadde he, two or thre,  
 640 That he had lerned out of som decree.  
 No wonder is, he herde it al the day,  
 And eek ye knowen wel, how þat a iay  
 Kan clepen 'Watte' as wel, as kan the pope.  
 But, who so koude in oother thyng hym grope,  
 645 Thanne hadde he spent al his philosophie:  
 Ay '*questio, quid iuris*' wolde he crie.  
 He was a gentil harlot and a kynde:  
 A better felaw sholde men noght fynde.  
 He wolde suffre for a quart of wyn  
 650 A good felaw to haue his concubyn  
 A twelf-moneth and excuse hym atte fulle.  
 Ful priuely a fynch eek koude he pulle,  
 And, if he foond owher a good felawe,  
 He wolde techen him to have noon awe  
 655 In swich caas of the ercedekenes curs,  
 But if a mannes soule wer in his purs;  
 For in his purs he sholde ypunysshed be.  
 'Purs is the ercedekenes helle', seyde he,  
 But wel I woot, he lyed right in dede:  
 660 Of cursynghe oghte ech gilty man him drede  
 (For curs wol slee, right as assoillyng sauith),  
 And also ware him of a *significauit*.  
 In daunger hadde he at his owne gise  
 The yonge girles of the diocise  
 665 And knew hir conseil and was al hir reed.  
 A gerland hadde he set vp on his heed  
 As greet, as it wer for an ale stake:  
 A bokeleer hadde he maad him of a cake.

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637.8 f. H 642 Iay E 643 watte E 644 koude] wolde M  
 645 Ph. E 648 felawe EH || noght] nowher M 650 felawe EHM ||  
 to f. M 651 monthe EH, moneth M 652 Ful] And EML 654 for  
 to M || Awe E 655 such a M || Erc. E 656 were EHM 657 yp.  
 EH, punyssched M u. d. übr. 658 Erce. E || seyde] quod M 659 lyeth  
 MU 660 cursyng EHM || oweth ME || him CL, f. EHU, to MP  
 662 war EH || Sign. E 663 he hadde M || owene EH || gise] assise M  
 667 were EHM || Ale E 668 Cake E

- With hym ther rood a gentil pardonere  
 670 Of Rounciual, his freend and his compeer,  
 That streight was comen fro the court of Rome  
 Ful loude he soong: 'com hider, loue, to me.'  
 This somonour bar to hym a stif burdoun:  
 Was neuere trompe of half so greet a soun.  
 675 This pardonere had heer as yelow, as wex,  
 But smothe it heeng, as dooth a strike of flex:  
 By ounces henge his lokkes, þat he hadde,  
 And ther with he his shuldres ouerspradde,  
 But thynne it lay by colpouns oon and oon.  
 680 And hood for iolitee ne wered he noon;  
 For it was trussed vp in his walet.  
 Hym thoughte, he rood al of the newe iet:  
 Discheuelee saue his cappe he rood al bare.  
 Swiche glarynge eyen hadde he, as an hare.  
 685 A vernycle hadde he sowed on his cappe.  
 His walet lay biforn hym in his lappe  
 Bret ful of pardoun comen from Rome al hoot.  
 A voys he hadde as smal, as hath a goot.  
 No berd ne hadde he ne neuere sholde haue:  
 690 As smothe it was, as it wer late yshaue.  
 I trowe, he were a geldyng or a mare.  
 But of his craft fro Berwyk vn to Ware  
 Ne was ther swich another pardonere;  
 For in his male he hadde a pilwe beer,  
 695 Which þat, he seyde, was our lady veyl.  
 He seyde, he hadde a gobet of the seyl,  
 That seinte Peter hadde, whan he wente

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669 rood] was *E* || *Pard. E* 670 Rounciual *E*, Rounceyual *H*  
 673 Som. *E* 675 *Pard. E* || hadde *EHM* 677 hise *E* 678 hise *E*  
 679 But] Ful *M* || colpons *EHM* 680 And *MU*] But *EH u. d. übr.*  
 || Iolitee *E* || ne *M, f. EH u. d. übr.* 682 Iet *E* 685 on *MC*,  
 vp on *EH u. d. übr.* 686 lay *M, f. EH u. d. übr.* 688 hath a  
*EHU*, a *CP*, it were a *L*, eny *M* 689 i. ne *MCP, f. EHLU*  
 690 were *EH*, ware *M* || shaue *E* 692 unto *M*, in to *EH u. d. übr*  
 693 *Pard. E* 695 oure *EHM* 697 Thatte *Tyrwhitt*, Which that  
*ten Brink* || seint (seynt) *EHM u. d. übr.* || whan *M*, whan þat *EH*  
*u. d. übr.*

- Vp on the see, til Iesu Crist hym hente.  
 He hadde a croys of latoun ful of stones,  
 700 And in a glas he hadde pigges bones,  
 But with this relikes, whan þat he fond  
 A poure persoun dwellynge vp on lond,  
 Vp on a day he gat hym moor moneye,  
 Than þat the persoun gat in monthes tweye,  
 705 And thus with feyned flaterye and iapes  
 • He made the persoun and the peple his apes  
 But, trewely to tellen atte laste,  
 He was in chirche a noble ecclesiaste.  
 Wel koude he rede a lessoun or a storie,  
 710 But alderbest he song an offertorie;  
 For wel he wiste, whan þat song was songe,  
 He moste preche and wel affile his tonge  
 To wynne siluer, as he ful wel koude:  
 Therfore he song the murierly and loude.
- 715 **N**ow haue I toold you soothly in a clause  
 Thestaat, tharray, the nombre and eek the cause,  
 Why þat assembled was this compaignye  
 In Southwerk at this gentil hostelrye,  
 That hight the Tabard, faste by the Belle.  
 720 But now is tyme to yow for to telle,  
 How that we baren vs that ilke nyght,  
 Whan we wer in that hostelrie alyght;  
 And after wol I telle of our viage  
 And al the remenaunt of our pilgrimage.  
 725 But first I pray yow, of your curteisye,  
 That ye narette it nat my vileynye,

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698 crist *E* 701 thise *EHM* || reliks *ten Brink* || whanne *Tyr-*  
*whitt u. ten Brink mit Mh<sup>2</sup>* 702 person *E*, parson *H* (*ebenso* 704.  
 706) 703 moore *EH*, more *M* 704 Monthes *E* 705 Iapes *E*  
 706 Apes *E* 710 Off. *E* 711 wyst he *M* 713 ful] right *M*, *f.*  
*CLPU* 714 Therefore *EM* || the *EHU*, so *CPL Ellis*, ful *M* || meriely  
*MCPL*, merier *Tyrwhitt*, mery *Ellis* 715 soothly] shortly *E*, schortly  
*M* 716 The staat *E* 718 at] as *E* 719 highte *EHM* || belle *E*  
 721 in that i. *M* 722 were *EM*, weere *H* 724 oure *EHM* 725 youre  
*EH* 726 narette *EHU*, ne rette *M u. d. übr.*



- Thogh þat I pleylnly speke in this mateere  
 To telle yow hir wordes and hir cheere,  
 Ne thogh I speke hir wordes proprely;  
 730 For this ye knowen al so wel, as I:  
 Who so shal telle a tale after a man,  
 He moot reherce, as ny as euere he kan,  
 Euerich a word, if it be in his charge,  
 Al speke he neuer so rudeliche and large,  
 735 Or ellis he moot telle his tale vntrewe  
 Or feyne thyng or fynde wordes newe.  
 He may nat spare, al thogh he were his brother:  
 He moot as wel sey o word, as another.  
 Crist spak hym self ful brode in hooly writ,  
 740 And wel ye woot, no vileynye is it.  
 Eek Plato seith, who so that kan hym rede,  
 The wordes moote be cosyn to the dede.  
 Also I prey yow to foryeue it me,  
 Al haue I nat set folk in hir degree  
 745 Heere in this tale, as þat they sholde stonde:  
 My wit is short, ye may wel vnderstonde.  
 Greet chiere made our hoost vs euerichon,  
 And to the soper sette he vs anon.  
 He serued vs with vitaille at the beste:  
 750 Strong was the wyn and wel to drynke vs leste.  
 A seemly man our hooste was with alle  
 For to han been a marchal in an halle.  
 A large man he was with eyen stepe  
 (A fairer burgeys is ther noon in Chepe),  
 755 Boold of his speche and wys and well ytaught,  
 And of manhode lakked hym right naught.

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727 I speke al pleyln *M* 732 moote *E*, moste *M* 733 a *f*.  
*MP* 734 and] and so *L*, or *E*, ne *M* 736 his wordes *M* 737 al  
*f*. *M* 738 moste *M* || seye *EH* 741 that *M*, *f*. *EH u. d. übr.* 744 folk  
*vor nat M* 746 short] thynne *M* 747 oure *EHM* 749 And's. *EM*  
 751 semely *EHM* || oure *EHM* || ooste *M*, hoost *EH* 752 han *M*, *f*.  
*EH u. d. übr.* || Mar. *E* 753 was he *M* 754 Burgeys *E* || is] was *EH*  
 756 manhood ne lakkede hym *ten Brink* || manhod *E*, manhede *M*  
 || l. h. *Ellis*, lakkede he *M*, hym lakked *EH u. d. übr.*

- Eek therto he was right a myrie man,  
 And after soper pleyen he bigan  
 And spak of myrthe amonges other thynges,  
 760 Whan that we hadde maad our rekenynges,  
 And seyde thus: 'now, lordyngs, trewely,  
 Ye been to me right welcom, hertely;  
 For, by my throuthe, if that I shal nat lye,  
 I ne saugh this yeer so myrie a compaignye  
 765 Atones in this herberwe, as is now.  
 Fayn wolde I doon yow myrthe, wiste I, how;  
 And of a myrthe I am right now bythoght  
 To doon yow ese, and it shal coste noght.  
 Ye goon to Caunterbury (god yow speede:  
 770 The blisful martir quite yow your meede),  
 And wel I woot, as ye goon by the weye,  
 Ye shapen yow to talen and to pleye;  
 For, trewely, confort ne myrthe is noon  
 To ride by the wey dounb, as a stoon;  
 775 And therfore wol I maken yow disport,  
 As I seyde erst, and doon yow som confort.  
 And, if yow liketh alle by oon assent  
 Now for to stonden at my iuggement  
 And for to werken, as I shal yow seye,  
 780 To morwe, whan ye riden by the weye,  
 Now by my fader soule, that is deed,  
 But ye be myrie, I wol yeue yow myn heed.  
 Hoold vp your hond withouten moore speche'.  
 Our conseil was not longe for to seche.  
 785 Vs thoughte, it nas noght worth to make it wys.  
 And graunted hym with outen moore auys  
 And bad him seye his voidrit, as hym leste.

757—758 *f. U* (*dafür S*) 759 *othur M*, *othere EH* 761 *now*] *lo M* || *lordynges EM*, *lordes H* 762 *welcome EM*, *wel come H*  
 764 *ne saugh M*, *saugh nat EH u. d. übr.*, *ne sawgh not Ellis*  
 770 *youre EHM* 772 *talen*] *talken M* 774 *weye EHM* || *a*] *any L*,  
 the *E, f. H* 776 *seyde EHM* 778 *Now M, f. EH u. d. übr.* ||  
*iugg. E* 782 *But if ye E* || *I—yow*] *smyteth of M* 783 *statt 784*  
*absatz E* || *youre EHM* || *hond EMC*, *hondes HLPV* 784 *Oure EHM*  
 785 *nas M*, *was EH u. d. übr.* 786 *wit outen E*

- 'Lordyngs', quod he, 'now herkneth for the beste,  
 But taak it nought (I prey yow) in desdeyn.  
 790 This is the poynt, to speken short and pleyn,  
 That ech of yow to shorte with your weye  
 In this viage shal telle tales tweye  
 To Caunterburyward (I mene it so,  
 And homward he shal tellen other two)  
 795 Of auentures, that ther han bifalle.  
 And, which of yow that bereth hym best of alle,  
 That is to seyn, that telleth in this caas  
 Tales of best sentence and moost solaas,  
 Shal haue a soper at your aller cost  
 800 Heere in this place sittynge by this post,  
 Whan that ye come agayn fro Caunterbury.  
 And for to make yow the moore mury  
 I wol my seluen gladly with yow ryde  
 Right at myn owne cost and be your gyde,  
 805 And, who so wole my iuggement withseye,  
 Shal paye al, that we spenden by the weye.  
 And if ye vouche sauf, that it be so,  
 Tel me anon with outen wordes mo,  
 And I wol erly shape me therfore.  
 810 This thyng was graunted and our othes swore  
 With ful glad herte, and preyden hym also,  
 That he would vouche sauf for to do so,  
 And that he wolde been our gouvernour  
 And of our tales iuge and reportour  
 815 And sette a soper at a certeyn pris,  
 And we wol reuled been at his deuys  
 In heigh and lough, and thus by oon assent  
 We been accorded to his iuggement.

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788 Lordynges *EHM* 789 taketh *HM* 791 youre *M*, your *C*,  
 oure *EH u. d. übr.* 793 so] o *Tyrwhitt* 794 tell another to *Tyrwhitt*,  
 tellen o therto *ten Brink* || othur *M*, othere *EH* 795 ther *M*, f. *S*,  
 whilom *EH u. d. übr.* 798 moost] of *M* 799 your *M*] oure *EH*  
*u. d. übr.* 801 ye *Tyrwhitt*] we *EHM u. d. übr.* 803 self *EH* ||  
 gladly *M*, goodly *EH u. d. übr.* 804 owene *EH*, owen *M* || youre  
*EHM* 805 Iugg. *E* 806 al that] for al *M* 810. 813 oure *EHM*  
 814 Iuge a. Rep. *E* 816 wolde *M* 817 *absatz E* 818 Iugg. *E*

- And ther vp on the wyn was fet anon:  
 820 We dronken and to reste wente echon  
 With outen any lenger taryyng.  
 Amorwe, whan þat day bigan to sprynge,  
 Vp roos our hoost and was our aller cok  
 And gadrede vs togidre all in a flok,  
 825 And forth we riden a litel moor, than paas,  
 Vn to the waterynge of seint Thomas,  
 And there our hoost bigan his hors areste  
 And seyde: 'lordes, herkneth, if yow leste.  
 Ye woot your forward, and I it yow recorde.  
 830 If euen song and morwe song accorde,  
 Lat se now, who shal telle the firste tale.  
 As euere mote I drynke wyn or ale,  
 Who so be rebel to my iuggement,  
 Shal pay for al, þat by the wey is spent.  
 835 Now draweth cut, er þat we ferther twynne:  
 He, which þat hath the shortest, shal bigynne.  
 'Sir knyght', quod he, 'my mayster and my lord,  
 Now draweth cut; for that is myn accord.  
 Cometh neer', quod he, 'my lady prioress,  
 840 And ye, sir clerk, lat be your shamefastnesse:  
 Ne studieth noght; ley hond to euery man'.  
 Anon to drawen euery wight bigan,  
 And, shortly for to tellen, as it was,  
 Were it by auenture or sort or cas,  
 845 The sothe is this, the cut fil to the knyght  
 (Of which ful blithe and glad was euery wyght),  
 And telle he moste his tale, as was resoun,  
 By forward and by composicioun,  
 As ye han herd: what nedeth wordes mo?

---

822 þat *EH*, that the *M*, the *d. übr.* || gan *LPS*, gan for *E*  
 823 oure *beidemal EHM* 824 all *C*, alle *EM*, *f. HLPS* 825 moor *e*  
*EH*, more *M* 826 wateryng *EH* || Seint *E* 827 oure *EHM* 828 lor-  
 dynges *E* 829 youre *EHM* || foreward *E* || I *f. EH* 831 the *f.*] ferst  
 a *M* 832 I moote *M* 833 Iugg. *E* 834 paye *EHM* 835 ferrer  
*EH*, forther *M*, ferther *d. übr.* 836 He *EH*, *f. M u. d. übr.* ||  
 shorteste *EH* 837 Sire *EHM* || i. my *f. M* 839 Prior. *E* 840 sire  
*EH* 846 glad and blithe *MP* 848 foreward *E*

850 And, whan this goode man saugh, it was so,  
As he, that wys was and obedient  
To kepe his forward by his free assent,  
He seyde: 'syn I shal bigynne the game,  
What, welcom be the cut a goddes name.  
855 Now lat us ryde and herkneth, what I seye'.  
And with that word we ryden forth our weye,  
And he bigan with right a myrie cheere  
His tale anon and seyde, as ye may here.

---

850 And] An *E* || bat it *alle* || so *f.* *H* 852 forew. *E* 854  
welcome *EM*, wel come *H* || the] thou *M* || a] in *H* 856 oure *EHM*  
858 anon *f.* *M* || as—here] in this manere *E*, right in this manere *M*

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